

Remarks

The Examiner's reconsideration of the application is requested in view of the amendments above and comments which follow.

Turning first to the amendments, the amendments of claim 1 are to insert the subject matter of claims 2 and 3 into independent claim 1, as well as independent claims 18 and 24. As such, it is submitted that the amendments should be entered after a final rejection given the previous existence of claims 2 and 3 in the application.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-3, 9, 18, 22 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Adams et al. published Application No. US 2002/0023883. Reconsideration is requested, as the applicant does not agree with the Examiner's position that Adams anticipates the claims, nor that it renders the remaining claims obvious. That is explained immediately below.

The present invention is concerned with the orientation of a woven wire cloth or screen (having warp and weft wires) with respect to a support structure (frame) defining one or more rectangular openings, to which the cloth is bonded.

In the prior art, as represented in Figures 6 and 7 of the present invention, the cloth is oriented so that the warp wires extend along the length of the rectangular opening of the support.

In contrast, in the present invention, as represented in Figure 8, the cloth is oriented so the warp wires extend across the width of the rectangular opening.

This relationship between the cloth and support is not disclosed in Adams. There is no discussion in Adams of the orientation of warp and weft wires relative to the support structure. Furthermore, there is no disclosure or suggestion of orientating a woven wire cloth in such a screen with its warp wires extending across the width of a rectangular opening in the support structure as is required by the present invention.

Although Adams discloses a rectangular mesh screen, e.g. as shown in Figure 19D, and states in paragraph 0061 that fluid flow may be either in the direction of the length of the non square openings or in the direction of the width of the non square openings, there is no disclosure in Adams of the relationship of the screen to the support.

On pages 2 to 3 of the action, the Examiner asserts that Adams discloses various features, but, with respect, applicant does not think that the statements are correct. Figure 19 of Adams, as

discussed at paragraphs 0057 to 0059, discloses a screen assembly comprising a support 213, e.g. support strips or frame, etc, and a series of rectangular mesh screens such as screens 212, 214 and 216. The last sentence of paragraph 0057 states that any two adjacent or all three screens may be bonded or connected together in any known manner, but no detail is given of the relationship between the mesh screens and the support. Paragraph 0061 says that the direction of fluid flow can be either in the direction of the length of the elongate openings of the screens of Figures 19C and 19D, i.e. left to right, or in the direction of the width of the openings, i.e. top-bottom. However, there is no disclosure of the relationship of the screen to the support.

Contrary to the Examiner's assertions, applicant can find no disclosure in Adams of an integral screen, namely a screen with a screen cloth bonded to a support structure and extending in a tensioned state across the support structure opening. Further, applicant can find no disclosure in Adams of the orientation of the cloth relative to a rectangular opening in a support structure, namely with the warp wires extending across the width. Although paragraph 0061 of Adams refers to two possible directions of flow, this can only sensibly be interpreted as referring to the orientation of the entire screen assembly, comprising screen and support, and not changing the orientation of the screen relative to the support.

There is also no disclosure in Adams of a support comprising an array of rectangular openings or windows, formed by a lattice of struts criss-crossing the larger opening, with the cloth bonded to the lattice struts, as specified in our present claim 2. The Examiner has referred to paragraph 0057 of Adams as allegedly disclosing this, but this simply refers to the possibility of bonding two or three screens together and is silent about the construction of the support and the connection of the screen thereto. It would seem that the Examiner is perhaps equating the lowermost screen with the support in a way that is not appropriate.

As far as independent claim 18 is concerned, the Examiner refers to Figures 4A and 5A of Adams as disclosing a cloth with generally square openings with warp wires, e.g. 106, having a greater cross sectional than weft wires, e.g. 102. Again, it is submitted that this is not an accurate statement as these Figures illustrate various arrangements with mixed smaller and larger diameter wires, and there is no disclosure of an arrangement in which all of the warp wires are of greater cross sectional area than all of the weft wires.

The Examiner's reading of Adams thus appears somewhat more expansive than justified.

Although applicant believes that the present claims are distinguished from Adams, applicant nevertheless proposes limiting the independent claims by introducing reference to the support having a plurality of rectangular openings, as specified in present claims 2 and 3. This provides an additional structural distinction over the prior art.

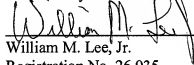
Applicant has also amended claim 18 to clarify that all of the warp wires have a greater cross sectional size than the weft wires.

Adopting the particular orientation of the woven wire cloth with respect to the support structure in the way that is crucial to the invention brings about benefits, as discussed in the paragraph bridging pages 6 and 7 of the August 10, 2009 response, in a way that does not arise with the structures disclosed in Adams.

It is therefore submitted that the application, as claimed, distinguishes from and is allowable over the prior art. Entry of this response and allowance of the application are therefore respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,



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